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Strengthening of the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women

Note by the Secretary-General

The Secretary-General has the honour to transmit hereby to the Commission on the Status of Women the report of the Director of the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women on the implementation of the Institute's programme of work and strategic plan 2004-2007. In paragraph 4 of its resolution 49/6, the Commission requested the Executive Director of the Institute to report to the Commission at its fiftieth session, in particular on those activities related to the follow-up to the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcome documents of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly.

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Report of the Director of the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women on the strengthening of the Institute

Summary

Pursuant to resolution 49/6 of the Commission on the Status of Women, the present report provides information on the implementation of the programme of work of the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women (INSTRAW). As recognized by the Commission in its resolution, the Institute has undertaken a number of strategic initiatives including the redesign of its website, the strengthening of cooperative arrangements with United Nations entities, the expansion of its research programme, the intensification of its fund-raising campaign, the enhancement of communication with governmental agencies, civil society, academia and the private sector, and the strengthening of its training, capacity-building and outreach activities.

The Institute's annual programmes of work draw from its strategic framework 2004-2007, which guides the Institute's work in three strategic areas: applied research, information gathering and dissemination, and capacity-building on gender issues. Each annual programme establishes specific thematic areas for the Institute's work and, through its outputs, lays the foundation for activities in subsequent years of the framework. The framework was devised on the basis of mandates and recommendations provided in resolutions, reports and outcome documents of the Institute's governing body and mandates received from international conferences, the Economic and Social Council and the General Assembly.

The Institute contributed to the review and appraisal of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action through an analysis and identification of areas of future work, and developed a pioneer initiative to include gender in the analysis of remittances and development. The aims of the latter are to highlight women's contribution to the economies of their countries of origin and identify women's needs and interests and changing roles within the family and policy recommendations to improve women's economic benefits.

As a result of its revitalization process, the Institute is better positioned to make valuable contributions to women's empowerment, gender equality, engendering the Millennium Development Goals, and gender mainstreaming throughout the United Nations system.

The commitment of sufficient resources from Member States in order to secure medium- and long-term sustainability for the Institute will facilitate its full compliance with its mandates.

Introduction

1. The framework of the strategic plan 2004-2007[1] outlines the mission, overarching goals and strategies to guide the work of the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women in support of the agenda for gender equality and women's advancement. The strategic plan is based on the Institute's founding mandate as set out by the Economic and Social Council and the General Assembly.[2] The strategic plan recognizes that the mandate based on which the Institute was founded has been augmented by successive Assembly and Council resolutions and decisions. In strategies agreed to at a series of major world conferences and summits and their follow-up, particularly the Millennium Summit, the Fourth World Conference on Women and the twenty-third special session of the Assembly, entitled "Women 2000: gender equality, development and peace for the twenty-first century", the Assembly, the Council and the Commission on the Status of Women had emphasized the role of the Institute as the only entity in the United Nations system devoted entirely to research, training and information on gender equality.

2. The strategic plan emphasizes that the mission of the Institute is to serve as a major catalyst in innovative gender initiatives, by continuing to focus on four strategic areas: applied research; information-sharing and dissemination; capacity-building; and institutional development.

3. The goals for each of these four areas are as follows:

- Applied research: conduct research on existing gender-responsive policies to assess the implementation/gaps; promote the application of lessons learned and the replication of best practices, and feed back into local, regional and global policies.
- Information-sharing and dissemination: develop effective management of gender-related knowledge so as to support Governments and civil society in their efforts to mainstream gender into policies and programmes.
- Capacity-building: support capacity-building on gender mainstreaming based on lessons learned from applied research and knowledge management.
- Institutional development of the Institute: shape a sustainable institution that is sound and innovative and applies good governance.

4. The Institute implements an annual workplan that sets out its specific activities in research, information-sharing and capacity-building from the strategic framework and lays the foundation for continued activities in subsequent years. The following section provides information on the implementation of the Institute's programmes of work for the period 2004-2005.

[1] The strategic framework of the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women 2004-2007 was approved by the Executive Board of the Institute at its resumed first session held in 2004. For more information, see the Institute website (http://www.un-instraw.org/en/index.php?option=content&task=view&id=43&Itemid=79).

[2] Economic and Social Council resolution 1998 (LX) of 12 May 1976 and Council decision 1984/124 of 24 March 1984 endorsed by the General Assembly in its resolution 39/122 of 14 December 1984.

I. Implementation of work

5. One of the major thrusts of the strategic plan 2004-2007 entails the strengthening of partnerships between the Institute and other organizations within the United Nations system. In this regard, the Institute continues to actively participate in the Inter-Agency Network on Women and Gender Equality and is a member of the task forces on gender equality; gender information and communication technologies; women, peace and security; WomenWatch; gender and water; and indigenous women.

6. The Institute and the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) had signed an agreement for collaboration in November 2004 that had the main objective of building synergies for women's empowerment and gender equality. Both entities jointly organized a meeting on "Gender information in the Americas" (26 and 27 May 2005, New York) at which information officers from United Nations organizations and non-governmental organizations gathered to discuss the availability and dissemination of gender information. Participants also identified the gaps in gender information resources in order to draw up a joint strategy for the production and dissemination of gender information.

7. The Institute has also signed a memorandum of understanding with the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) for the purpose of collaborating in various areas, including online courses on gender and information and communication technologies (ICT), gender and HIV/AIDS, trafficking of women, and gender and peace. Another area of collaboration with UNESCO concerns the establishment of a Palestinian Women's Resource Centre to serve as an observatory and clearing house of information related to women's issues in Palestine.

8. The Institute has also collaborated with the United Nations and other organizations on a number of other initiatives including: the UN-Energy network in the development of the policy document prepared on energy and the Millennium Development Goals; the Task Force for the Secretary-General's study on violence against women; and the Gender and Development section of Development Gateway, in which the Institute is now a "cooperating organization".

9. The Institute continued to cooperate with the United Nations Online Network in Public Administration and Finance (UNPAN).

10. The Institute has also received support from the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat, the Pan-American Health Organization (PAHO) and the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) with the participation of their personnel in the development of the Institute's strategic plan 2004-2007.

A. Research

11. Annual work programmes in 2004 and 2005 have identified specific issues for research including financing for development; ICT and women's empowerment; migration-related issues (remittances); security and gender; and governance and women's political participation.

Financing for development

12. The conceptual framework for and study on gender issues in financing for development[3] are available at a special website section which also contains a glossary of terms and other resources. The study, which has been printed, analyses the outcome document of the International Conference on Financing for Development, namely, the Monterrey Consensus of the International Conference on Financing for Development,[4] from a gender perspective; and it states that gender concerns were not adequately recognized, calls upon Governments and international institutions to recognize the crucial role of the economic empowerment of women and their contributions in both market and non-market sectors of the economy, and offers strategies for action.

ICT and women's empowerment

13. The Institute has developed a conceptual framework on gender and ICT available through the Institute website. This framework includes an overview of the main issues, perspectives on future directions for research, a glossary, a bibliography and other resources. In addition, it provides the complete texts of Institute papers on topics such as the potential of ICT for women's empowerment, gender and e-government, and women's employment in call centres.

Migration-related issues (remittances)

14. Despite the emergence of increasing numbers of migrant women workers and the growing importance of remittances for the economies of many families in developing countries, very little systematic research has been conducted on the gender dimensions of remittances. A critical review of the impacts of remittances from a gender perspective can enrich the identification of policies aimed at increasing the development potential of remittances. To address this situation, the Institute developed a research framework for a gender analysis of the sending and receipt of remittances as well as their impact on household and gender relations.

15. The research framework is available through the Institute website. The Institute also prepared a working paper (June 2005) that addresses issues such as traditional forms of inheritance; access to credit; limitations on property ownership; use, control and distribution of resources within the household; the sexual division of labour; and decision-making within households and communities. Published under the title "Crossing Borders: Gender Remittances and Development", the paper aims to establish the basis for formulating a more adequate response to questions such as how the growing feminization of migration affects remittance flows; how remittances can contribute to the achievement of gender equality; and how remittances can be mobilized so that sustainable development that includes women can be achieved.

16. To raise awareness on the importance of analysing gender perspectives in respect of remittances in the Americas, the Institute collaborated with the Inter-

[3] Maria Floro and others, "Gender Issues and Concerns in Financing for Development", INSTRAW Occasional Paper No. 3, March 2004, available from www.un-instraw.org/en/index.php?option=content&task=view&id=838&Itemid=134 - 21k - Jan 9, 2006.

[4] *Report of the International Conference on Financing for Development, Monterrey, Mexico, 18-22 March 2002* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.02.II.A.7), chap. I, resolution 1, annex.

American Development Bank/Multilateral Investment Fund (MIF) in a seminar on gender and remittances held during the International Forum on Remittances (28-30 June 2005, Washington, D.C.). In a similarly organized meeting, INSTRAW collaborated with the Asian Development Bank to examine gender perspectives in remittances in this region. A compact disc containing background information, Institute working papers and other articles, a bibliography, a fact sheet, a glossary and texts of international agreements related to the issue of gender and remittances was prepared and circulated among participants at these and other related meetings.

17. The Institute also participated in other international events in order to emphasize the gender dimensions of remittances and their impact on women's economic and household status.[5] These meetings also provided opportunities for the Institute to highlight additional areas where research is still needed and stress the importance of mainstreaming gender into programmes and projects that address migration and remittances.

18. In keeping with the implementation of its 2005 workplan for this research area, the Institute initiated activities related to the undertaking of case studies in selected countries in order to gain further insights on the gender dimensions of remittances and their impact on gender relations and social change. With funding received from UNFPA, the Institute developed a methodology for case studies on gender and remittances. This methodology was first applied to a case study in the Dominican Republic,[6] which examines the impact of migrants' remittances transferred between the Dominican Republic and Spain. This methodology will also be applied to other case studies to be undertaken during 2006 in order to obtain comparable data.

Security and gender

19. In line with the Security Council's annual review of the implementation of its resolution 1325 (2000) on women, peace and security and to further promote gender mainstreaming in the security sector, the Institute has undertaken a number of activities. Two e-discussions were held on: gender and security sector reform; and gender and conflict prevention/conflict resolution.[7] There was general consensus that the definition of security needed to be broadened and that women's/gender issues were lacking in current security sector reform initiatives. Participants from both discussions identified research and capacity-building needs, such as the integration of gender issues into security sector reform assessments.

20. As part of the efforts to advocate for mainstreaming gender into security sector programming and reform efforts, the Institute prepared an analytical framework for gender and security sector reform which contains a number of resources and is available on the Institute's website.

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[5] International Conference for Women Leaders on "Migration and Gender Issues within the Millennium Development Goals", held in Haifa, Israel, from 25 to 28 September 2005; and the Tenth Association for Women's Rights in Development (AWID) International Forum on Women's Rights and Development entitled "How Does Change Happen?", held in Bangkok from 27 to 30 October 2005.

[6] "Development potential of remittances with a gender perspective: the case of the Dominican Republic".

[7] These e-discussions were held from 4 October to 7 November 2004 and from 22 November to 20 December 2004, respectively. Summaries of the discussions are available through the Institute's website.

21. In order to promote the need to include gender issues in policies and programmes on the security sector, the Institute organized a workshop entitled "What Next? Research and Training for the Implementation of SCR 1325" on 27 October 2004 in New York. This was followed by participation in a series of meetings including the Panel on Men, Women and Gun Violence: Options for Action organized by UNIFEM and co-chaired by the Institute (14 July 2005, New York); the Third Meeting of International Inter-parliamentarian Dialogue on Violence against Women (15 and 16 September 2005, Madrid); the International Congress to Support Harmonization of Local Legislation with International Instruments for Women's Human Rights (21 September 2005, Mexico); the regional meeting on "Developing a Culture of Peace and Conflict Prevention in the Greater Caribbean" (22 and 23 September 2005, Santo Domingo); and the Workshop for United Nations Entities on Violence against Women (5-7 December 2005, New York).

22. In line with the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects,[8] the Institute participated in a meeting held in New York to analyse the gender dimensions of the use of small weapons and also collaborates with the International Action Network on Small Arms.

23. As part of its ongoing work in this area, the Institute has prepared a guide entitled "Securing Equality, Engendering Peace: A Guide to Policy and Planning on Women, Peace And Security", which serves as a resource for Governments and organizations in the drafting of their plans of action on women, peace and security issues with the aim of strengthening the implementation of Security Council resolution 1325 (2000). In addition, the Institute has prepared a methodological guide for the prevention of violence against young women, whose aim is to contribute to the development of awareness-raising and training plans on these issues. The guide is intended for youths, decision makers, technical personnel from government ministries and other organizations, and community leaders.

24. The Institute mainstreamed gender in the Training Package on Public Security developed by the United Nations Development Programme Subregional Resource Facility (UNDP SURF) and, in addition, developed a specific tool and a training module on the prevention of violence against women to be added to the package. Through the Institute's collaboration in this project, the prevention of violence against women is perceived to be a key element of an effective public security sector and one of the greatest challenges to human security. As a result, specific measures and mechanisms have been incorporated in order to ensure adequate training and capacity-building activities for security sector actors. The Institute, on the basis of the package, has also carried out two training seminars, in the Dominican Republic and El Salvador, with relevant stakeholders.

Governance and women's political participation

25. The Institute obtained extrabudgetary funding for the project entitled "Strengthening Governance with a Gender Focus and the Participation of Women at the Local Level". The project, which will be funded by the Spanish Agency for International Cooperation (Agencia Española de Cooperación Internacional

[8] See *Report of the United Nations Conference on the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects, New York, 9-20 July 2001* (A/CONF.192/15), chap. IV, para. 24.

(AECI)), includes a special emphasis on indigenous populations and will focus on Central America, the Andean countries and Mexico.

26. The project aims to build a knowledge base and exchange of experiences on good practices and lessons learned; to reinforce local and national knowledge and capacity through the identification and strengthening of adequate mechanisms, the preparation and implementation of a training package addressing the needs of local and national institutions and organizations, and the formation or strengthening of support networks, utilizing ICT; and to promote and facilitate the formulation of public policies to improve governance with a gender perspective and women's political participation and leadership at the local level.

27. In the first quarter of 2005, the Institute met with ministers for women's/gender affairs from the Central American countries and Mexico in order to present the project proposal under discussion with the Spanish Agency for International Cooperation and to obtain their inputs prior to finalizing the proposal. Representatives from research institutions as well as from United Nations system organizations also participated in the meeting.

28. In relation to the Spanish Agency-funded project, the Institute also received funds from the National Institute for Women (Instituto Nacional de las Mujeres (INMUJERES)) of Mexico, intended to cover its participation in the project.

29. A coordination meeting for the project, to be held from 1 to 3 February 2006 at Institute headquarters in Santo Domingo, will bring together representatives of United Nations system organizations and bilateral cooperation agencies working in the Latin American and Caribbean region whose work includes governance and women's political participation. The purpose is to facilitate an effective coordination of activities, avoid duplication, and create synergies among various project stakeholders in the areas of gender and women's political participation at the local level.

30. A special section of the website was prepared on governance, gender and women's political participation and presents the conceptual framework therefor as well as a fact sheet, a glossary, information on international instruments and events and an annotated bibliography on women's political participation in local governance in Latin America.

31. A series of country profiles have been prepared on "Women's Political and Social Participation, and Governance" for the following countries: Algeria, the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Mauritania, Morocco and Tunisia. These profiles are available from the above-mentioned web section on the Institute's website.

32. In related activities, the Institute participated in several meetings and events including regional conferences on "Women: builders of local development" (El Salvador, 16-18 July 2005) and "Challenges for local development" (Ecuador, 19-21 September 2005).

B. Capacity-building

33. In response to the demonstrated demand for training materials, in particular from organizations in developing countries, the Institute expanded its collection of

gender training materials to include a mapping of existing programmes and tools; a roster of training institutes/centres; and the identification of gaps/needs.

34. The database of resources on gender mainstreaming was redesigned in order to make it more user-friendly and 300 new resources were added. The database highlights resources on issues of importance to developing countries such as water, agricultural and rural development, health and HIV/AIDS, and makes available a number of useful planning and programming resources on gender mainstreaming.

35. With funds from the Government of South Africa, earmarked for a project on HIV/AIDS and gender in Southern Africa, the Institute produced a manual for home-based caregivers, the majority of whom are illiterate and semi-literate women in resource-poor settings. The main objective of this manual is to provide family caregivers with a tool adapted to their context and specific needs that will increase their technical skills in order that the home-based care of people living with HIV/AIDS may be improved and the caregivers themselves may be helped to feel more comfortable with their roles. The manual was piloted in Zimbabwe by the researchers in a joint project undertaken by Stanford University, Palo Alto, California, and Zimbabwe University on women and HIV/AIDS. The manual, which was submitted to the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) and the World Health Organization (WHO), will be distributed in the field as part of the testing process. Owing to the identical roles that women play in home-based-care activities in countries with high HIV/AIDS prevalence, the Institute will also be adapting the manual to other countries and specific contexts.

36. The Institute supported activities aimed at capacity-building in the Dominican Republic through the facilitation of workshops on basic gender concepts, on women's health and on the preparation of proposals for projects with a gender perspective. Capacity-building activities for Institute staff were undertaken through their participation in a week-long national workshop on "Project Development with a Gender Perspective" held in April 2005. Staff members from government offices and other United Nations organizations in the host country also participated in the workshop which was carried out with funding provided by WHO/PAHO.

37. As part of its capacity-building programme in the Dominican Republic, the Institute has initiated a series of workshops with Dominican stakeholders on a variety of issues including women and youth, migration and ageing.

C. Information/communications

38. The Institute undertook an overhaul of its website with a view to modernizing it, making it more user-friendly, giving it a well-defined niche and complying with the strategic goal of dissemination of information. The redesigned website allows the Institute to operate as a clearing house for gender-related research and information. Additional measures were also taken to consolidate and expand the website in line with the 2005 workplan through the inclusion of additional research areas.

39. Statistics on the number of visits to and downloads from the redesigned website have shown a considerable increase since the website was launched in mid-2004. The user-page views per month increased more than 2 1/2 times during the first year of operation. Visits to specific sections of the website such as research,

training and mainstreaming also increased significantly and have maintained an upward trend.

40. Efforts were also made to consolidate and expand the French and Spanish versions of the site. An agreement was reached with the International Organization of la Francophonie whereby it would translate all Institute materials into French as a voluntary contribution to the Institute with a view to strengthening the dissemination of information in French-speaking countries.

41. The Institute's website was enhanced with *INSTRAW Review*, a periodical magazine including opinion pieces, interviews and relevant news items on gender issues worldwide. The *Review* is published online in English, French and Spanish and is also distributed to various mailing lists. Past issues have focused on violence against women, gender and the Millennium Development Goals, gender, peace and security, and gender and energy.

42. The Institute has implemented a communications strategy through which messages related to special observances are widely disseminated among the Institute's worldwide network. These messages also draw attention to the work of the Institute as featured on its website and have proved to be an effective means of information-sharing.

43. In March 2005, the Institute launched a new paper series entitled "New Voices, New Perspectives" which aims to support and disseminate emerging research on women's and gender issues. Papers were invited in four priority research areas: gender and remittances; gender and ICT; gender and security sector reform; and gender and political participation at the local level. Eleven papers were selected and published online in their original language (English, French or Spanish). In addition, three outstanding papers were selected for printing. Papers have been received on:

(a) Gender and political participation: (i) local commissions of women in the Philippines, (ii) women in village councils in India, (iii) women's struggle for political power in Cambodia, (iv) women's political disenchantment in Colombia, (v) lessons from the quota system policy in the water sector in Nepal and (vi) Islam and women's leadership;

(b) Gender and remittances: (i) migrant workers and household welfare in Sri Lanka and (ii) impact of remittances on development in the Dominican Republic;

(c) Gender, peace and security: (i) changing masculinities in the Armed Forces of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, (ii) gender analysis of the responsibility-to-protect doctrine and (iii) how development interventions address gender-based violence.

II. Follow-up to the Beijing review process

44. In compliance with General Assembly resolution 59/260 of 23 December 2004, in paragraph 4 of which the Assembly requested the Institute in accordance with its mandate, to actively participate in and contribute to the review and appraisal of the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcome document of the twenty-third special session of the Assembly in the context of the forty-ninth session of the Commission on the Status of Women, the

Institute prepared a series of overview reports covering each of the 12 critical areas of the Platform for Action.[9] These reports were prepared with two objectives in mind: (a) to highlight successful experiences or "best practices" for addressing gender equality issues at the local, national and international levels and (b) to identify priority areas for future action. These reports are available in English, French and Spanish on the Institute's website and have been also distributed as a compact disc on the Beijing process.

45. In compliance with the Economic and Social Council agreed conclusions on mainstreaming the gender perspective into all policies and programmes in the United Nations system,[10] the Institute has published a gender mainstreaming guide on its website which contains a collection of over 350 resources. Its objective is to facilitate gender mainstreaming of projects, programmes and policies. Basic sections include introductions, policies and plans, and manuals, in addition to lessons learned and best practices for gender mainstreaming. Gender mainstreaming resources are also available on more than 20 different issues such as health, labour, migration, economics and education, among many others. This section of the Institute website receives the most visits.

46. The Institute has also collaborated with UNFPA and WHO in the preparation of an overview document on gender, ageing and health as part of the Beijing review process. In this regard, the Institute participated in a meeting (New York, 28 February-1 March 2005) in which the draft of the document was initially reviewed.

47. The Institute participated at a meeting of the PAHO Subcommittee on Women, Health and Development (Washington, D.C., 15 and 16 March 2005) at which it gave a presentation entitled "Missing Links: Gender Equality and the MDGs". This presentation pointed out that the Millennium Development Goals, as a powerful tool for generating consensus on international development, had the potential to further the achievement of gender equality and the empowerment of women if each of the goals took into account women's unique needs and priorities. For example, violence against women is practically invisible in the Millennium Development Goals and yet the elimination of violence against women is crucial for the equitable achievement of all eight of the goals. The presentation affirmed that the Millennium Development Goals were a practical starting point for the implementation of the Cairo and Beijing programmes and that, in turn, the Cairo and Beijing programmes contained perspectives and actions essential for the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals.

48. The Institute was invited to make one of two key presentation at the International Seminar on "International Organizations, Cooperation and Gender Mainstreaming: Good Practices and Lessons Learned" (17 November 2005, Madrid) organized by the Spanish Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation, Universidad Complutense de Madrid — Instituto Complutense de Estudios Internacionales, and Casa de America.

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[9] *Report of the Fourth World Conference on Women, Beijing, 4-15 September 1995* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.96.IV.13), chap. I, resolution 1, annex II.

[10] See *Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-second Session, Supplement No. 3* (A/52/3/Rev.1 and Add.1), chap. IV, sect. A, para. 4.